

from the ground it is seventeen feet in girth. It is sixty feet in height, and the extremity of its boughs includes a line of one hundred and eighteen feet. It is in this last particular that its great attraction consists. When it is in the full pride of its foliage, it strikes the spectator with sensations similar to those inspired by the magnificent Banyan trees of the East. Its boughs bending to the earth, with almost artificial regularity of form and equidistance from each other, give it the appearance of a gigantic tent; with verdant draperies, drawn up to admit the refreshing breezes that curl the myriads of leaves, which form all together, what may be called a living mass of vegetable beauty and grandeur, scarcely to be equalled by any other production of the same nature in the kingdom. If, however, in the full pride of summer, this tree presents so refreshing a spectacle of breathing coolness, and amplitude of shade, it affords a still more singular and striking one in the invigorating sharpness of an autumnal morning; when its thousand boughs, and every pendent twig, are gemmed with crystals, reflecting the rays which no longer scorch, and dazzle only to please. The following lines, inspired by contemplating it under this aspect, and written beneath the branches thus clothed in icicles, whose brief glories were rapidly melting away before an ascending sun, will not, it is presumed, be unacceptable to the lover of fanciful imagery and harmonious numbers.

WHERE now my spirit lapp'd in dreaming mood,
I verily might think, majestic tree!
That I (for Kate is near) in company
Of some most fair and beauteous Naiad stood
In her own temple, 'neath the fountain flood;
In her own temple, roof'd all gorgeously
With jern and chrysolite—or, I might be
Embower'd with Fairy-queen in magic wood,

The small leaves raining down a silver light,
About our couch—or, under ceiling bright,
Starr'd with the twinklings of ten thousand eyes,
Such as illumine the Hours' paradise;
Or else—but ah! so wondrous fair the sight,
That fancy in the unfinished effort dies!

PLATE XII.—THE FREDVILLE OAK, BEAUTY.

THIS is one of the three Oaks belonging to John Plumtre, Esq., described in the fourth page of this work, wherein the dimensions of it are also given. It is distinguished by the name of Beauty, from its sisters, Majesty and Stately. "Is it not a pity," says Sir Edward Harley, speaking of some ancient trees of his own, "that such goodly creatures should be devoted to Vulcan?" No such fate, however, attends this graceful trio; and the pleasure with which the spectator views their different characteristics, is heightened by a sense that they are likely to remain protected and cherished, equally in their decay, as in their prime.

PLATE XIII.—THE CHESNUT TREE CALLED THE FOUR SISTERS.

THE Chesnut is indigenous to England, and will thrive in almost any soil, and any situation. In variety of usefulness its timber equals, and in some respects excels, that of the Oak. Its luxuriance of foliage, and feathered stems, render it conspicuous among all other trees for beauty; and its fruit might, by proper management, be made a valuable article of food, in this country, as it is in France and Italy, where it is subjected to a variety of culinary processes, that convert it into delicacies for the tables of the luxurious, and into nutritious bread for the humbler classes.

The Chesnut sometimes grows to a prodigious size. Evelyn speaks of one in Gloucestershire which contained "within the bowels of it, a pretty wainscoted room, enlightened with windows, and furnished with seats," &c.; but the largest known in the world is upon Mount Etna, in Sicily. This tree, which goes by the name of *Castagno de Cento Cavalli*, is described by Brydone, who went to see it, through five or six miles of almost impassable forests which grew out of the lava, as having the appearance of five large trees growing together; but upon a more accurate examination, strengthened by the assurances of scientific persons, he became inclined to believe that they had been formerly united in one solid stem, and on measuring the hollow space within, he found it two hundred and four feet round: Carrera's assertion that there was wood enough in that one tree to build a large palace, can, therefore, scarcely be regarded as an exaggeration.